

Mr. Wright in the Character of Don Carlos.



Weep not, Alzira! — I forgive again. Act 5th

Very faint

Published by J. Harrison & Co. Aug^r 1779.

Printed

Mr. Wright in the Character of Don Carlos.



Weep not, Alzira! — I forgive again. Act 5.th

Very faint

Published by J. Harrison & Co. Aug^r 1779.

Printed

A L Z I R A.

L. Voltaire

A

T R A G E D Y.

As it is Acted at the

T H E A T R E S - R O Y A L

I N

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

Written by A A R O N H I L L.



L O N D O N :

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No 18, Paternoster-Row; and Sold, likewise by
J. WENMAN, Fleet-Street; and all other Booksellers.

M DCC LXXIX.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN some raw paddler from the waded shore,
First dares the deep'ning stream, and ventures
o'er,

Light on his floating cork the wave he skims,
And, wanton in his safety, thinks he swims:
So shall Alzira's fame our faults protect,
And from your censure screen each fear'd defect.
For should we act, unskill'd, the players parts,
We act such scenes—as force us to your hearts:
What floods of tears a neighb'ring land saw flow,
When a whole people wept Alzira's woe!
The loveliest eyes of France, in one pleas'd night,
Twice charm'd, renew'd, and lengthen'd out delight.
Twice charm'd, renew'd the sad, the melting strain,
Yet hung, insatiate, on the willing pain!
Thrice thirty days, all Paris fix'd for sense!
Tumblers stood still—and thought—in wit's defence;
E'en power despotic felt, how wrongs can move,
And nobly wept for liberty and love.
Can it be fear'd then, that our gen'rous land,
Where justice blooms, and reason holds command;
This soil of science! where bold truth is taught,
This seat of freedom, and this throne of thought,
Can pour applause on foreign song and dance,
Yet leave the praise of solid sense to France?
No—that's impossible—'tis Britain's claim,
To hold no second place in taste or fame.
In arts and arms alike victorious known,
What'er deserves her choice she makes her own.
Nor let the conscious power of English wit
Less feel the force, because a Frenchman writ.
Reason and sentiment, like air and light,
Where'er found, are nature's common right.
Since the same sun gives northern climes their day,
After the east has first receiv'd it's rays,
Why should our pride repel the Muse's smile,
Because it dar'nd not first upon our isle?
Fraternal art adopts each alien fame;
The wise and brave are every where the same.
From hostile sentiments let discord flow;
But they who think like friends, should have no foe.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ALZIRA.

THE *first act pass'd*, you'll think it strange to
find
My scene of deep distress is yet behind.
Told for the epilogue, I fear you'll blame
My want—of what you love, behind that name.

But, for my soul, I can't, from such high seeing,
Descend, plumb down at once—to double-meaning.
Judges! protect me—and pronounce it fit,
That solemn sense, shou'd and with serious wit.
When the full heart o'erflows with pleasing pain,
Why should we wish to make th' impression vain?
Why, when two thinking hours have fix'd the play,
Shou'd two light minutes laugh it's use away?
Tisere to proclaim our virtues but a jest,
Should they who ridicule 'em, please us best.
No—rather, at your actor's hands require
Off'rings more apt, and a sublimer fire!
Thoughts that may rivet, not efface, the scene;
Aids to the mind, not flatteries for the spleen.
When love, hate, pity—doubt, hope, grief, and rage,
With clashing influence, fire the glowing stage;
When the touch of a heart, relenting into woe,
From others fate, does it's own danger know;
When soft'ning tenderness unlocks the mind,
And the stretch'd bosom takes in all mankind:
Sure, 'tis no time for the bold hand of wit
To snatch back virtues from the plunder'd pit.
Still be it ours, to give you scenes thus strong,
And yours to cherish, and retain 'em long!
Then shall the stage it's general use endear,
And every virtue gather firmness here,
Pow'r be to pardon—wealth to pity mov'd;
And truth be taught the art, to grow below'd;
Women to charm, with fast and sure effect;
And men to love 'em with a soft respect.
Till all alike, some diff'rent motive rouses;
And tragedy, unfair'd, invites full houses.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

DON CARLOS, Governor of Peru, for the Spaniards.
DON ALVAREZ, Father of Don Carlos, and former Governor.
ZAMOR, Indian Sovereign of one Part of the Country.
EZMONT, Indian Sovereign of another Part.

W O M E N,

ALZIRA, Daughter of Ezmont.
EMIRA, } Alzira's Women.
CEPHANIA, }

Spanish and American Captains and Soldiers.

SCENE, in the City of LIMA.

A L Z I R A.

A C T I.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

No. **A** T length the council, partial to my prayer,
Has to a son I love transferr'd my power.

Carlos, rule happy; be a viceroy long;
Long for thy prince, and for thy God, maintain
This younger, richer, lovelier, half the globe;
Too fruitful, heretofore, in wrongs and blood;
Crimes the lamented growths of powerful gold!
Safe to thy abler hand devolve, resign'd,
Those sovereign honours which oppress'd my years,
And dimm'd the feeble lamp of wasted age.
Yet had it long, and not unuseful, flam'd.
I first o'er wond'ring Mexico in arms
March'd the new horrors of a world unknown!
I steer'd the floating towers of fearless Spain
Through the plow'd bosom of an unfri'd sea:
Too happy, had my labours been so bless'd,
To change my brave associate's rugged souls,
And soften stubborn heroes into men.
Their cruelties, my son, eclips'd their glory:
And I have wept a conqueror's splendid shame,
Whom heaven not better made, and yet made great.
Wearied at length, I reach my life's last verge;
Where I shall peaceful veil my eyes in rest;
If ere they close, they but behold my Carlos
Ruling Potosi's realm by christian laws,
And making gold more rich by gifts from Heav'n.

D. Car. Taught and supported by your great ex-
learn't beneath your eye to conquer realms, [ample,
Which by your counsels I may learn to govern;
Giving those laws I first receive from you.

Alv. Not so.—Divided power is power disarm'd.
Outworn by labour, and decay'd by time,
Pomp is no more my wish. Enough for me
That heard in council age may temper rashness.
Trust me, mankind but ill rewards the pains
Of over-prompt ambition.—'Tis now time
To give my long neglected God those hours
Which close the languid period of my days.

One only gift I ask, refuse not that;
As friend I ask it, and as father claim.
ardon those poor Americans, condemn'd
or wand'ring hither, and this morning seiz'd.
To my disposal give 'em kindly up,
That liberty, unhop'd, may charm the more:
A day like this should merit smiles from all;
And mercy, soft'ning justice, mark it bless'd.

D. Car. Sir, all that fathers ask, they must com-
et condescend to recollect how far [mand.
his pity, undeserv'd, might hazard all.
instant towns, like ours, methinks 'twere safe
ot to familiarize these savage spies.
we accustom foes to look too near,
e teach 'em, at our cost, to slight those swords
hey once saw trembling from, whence'er they saw.

Frowning revenge, and awe of distant dread,
Not smiling friendship, tames these sullen souls.
The fow'r American, unbroke, and wild,
Spurns with indignant rage, and bites his chain:
Humble when punish'd; if regarded, fierce.
Power sickens by forbearance: rigid men,
Who feel not pity's pangs, are best obey'd.
Spaniards, 'tis true, are rul'd by honour's law,
Submit unmutur'd, and unforc'd go right:
But other nations are impell'd by fear,
And must be rein'd, and spur'd, with hard controul.
The gods themselves, in this ferocious clime,
Till they look grim with blood, excite no dread.

Alv. Away, my son, with these detested schemes!
Perish such politic reproach of rule!
Are we made captains in our Maker's cause,
O'er these new christians call'd to stretch his name,
His peaceful name! and shall we, unprovok'd,
Bear murders, which our holy cheats presume
To mispronounce his injur'd altar's due!
Shall we dispeople realms, and kill to save!
Such if the fruits of Spain's religious care,
I, from the distant bounds of our old world,
Have to this new one stretch'd a Saviour's name,
To make it hateful to one half the globe,
Because no mercy grac'd the other's zeal.
No, my misguided Carlos, the broad eye
Of one Creator takes in all mankind:
His laws expand the heart; and we, who thus
Wou'd by destruction propagate relief,
And mix with blood and gold religion's growth,
Stamp in these Indians honest breasts a scorn
Of all we teach, from what they see we do.

D. Car. Yet the learn'd props of our unerring
Whom zeal for saving souls deprives of rest, [church,
Taught my late youth, committed to their care,
That ignorance, averse, must be compell'd. [fire;

Alv. Our priests are all for vengeance, force, and
And only in his thunder act their God.
Hence we seem thieves; and what we seem we are.
Spain has robb'd every growth of this new world,
Even to it's savage nature!—Vain, unjust,
Proud, cruel, covetous, we, we alone,
Are the barbarians here!—An Indian heart
Equals, in courage, the most prompt of ours,
But in simplicity of artless truth,
And every honest native warmth, excels us.
Had they, like us, been bloody; had they not
By pity's power been mov'd, and virtue's love,
No son of mine had heard a father, now,
Reprove his erring rashness.—You forget,
That when a prisoner in these people's hands,
Gall'd and provok'd by cruelty and wrongs,
While my brave followers fell on every side,
Till I alone surviv'd; some Indians knew me,
Knew me, and suddenly pronounc'd my name.
At once they threw their weapons to the ground.

And a young savage chief, whom yet I know not,
 Grateful approach'd, and, kneeling, press'd my knees.
 Alvarez, is it you! he cry'd—Live long!
 Ours be you, virtue, but not ours your blood!
 Live, and instruct oppressors to be lov'd.—
 Bless'd be those tears, my son!—I think you weep.
 Joy to your soft'ning soul! Humanity
 Has power, in nature's right, beyond a father.
 But from what motive sprung this late decline
 From clemency of heart to new-born rigour?
 Had you been always cruel, with what brow
 Cou'd you have hop'd to charm the lov'd Alzira;
 Heirs to realms despoiled by your sword!
 And though your captive, yet your conqueror too.
 Trust me—with women worth the being won,
 The softest lover ever best succeeds.

D. Car. Sir, I obey: your pleasure breaks their
 Yet 'tis their duty to embrace our faith: [chains;
 So runs the king's command.—To merit life,
 Quit they their idol worship, and be free.
 So thrives religion, and compels the blind;
 So draws our holy altar souls by force,
 Till opposition dies, and sleeps in peace;
 So links a govern'd world in faith's strong chain;
 And but one monarch serves, and but one God.
Alv. Hear me, my son.—That crown'd in this new
 Religion may erect her holy throne, [world,
 Is what, with ardent zeal, my soul desires;
 Let Heaven and Spain find here no future foe!
 Yet ne'er did persecution's offspring thrive:
 For the forc'd heart, submitting, still resists.
 Reason gains all men, by compelling none.
 Mercy was always Heaven's distinguish'd mark;
 And he who bears it not, has no friend there.

D. Car. Your reasons, like your arms, are sure to
 I am instructed and ennobled by them! [conquer.
 Indulgent virtue dwells in all you say,
 And softens, while you speak, the list'ning soul!
 Since Heaven has bless'd you with this powerful gift,
 To breathe persuasion, and uncharm resolves,
 Pronounce me favour'd, and you make me so.
 Warm my Alzira's coldness; dry her tears;
 And teach her to be mine.—I love that maid,
 Spite of my pride! blush at it—but still love her!
 Yet will I ne'er, to sooth unyielding scorn,
 Unman the soldier in the lover's cause.
 I cannot stoop to fan a hopeless flame,
 And be in vain her slave.—You, Sir, might aid me:
 You can do all things with Alzira's father.
 Bid him command his daughter to be kind:
 Bid him—But whither would my love mislead me!
 Forgive the blind presumption of a hope,
 That to my int'rest stoops my father's rank;
 And sends him beggar to an Indian's door!

Alv. 'Tis done already. I have urg'd it to him.
 Ezmont has mov'd his daughter in your cause.
 Wait the prepar'd event. Heaven has been kind;
 Since these illustrious captives both are christians;
 Ezmont my convert, and his daughter his.
 Alzira governs a whole people's minds;
 Each watchful Indian reads her studied eye,
 And to her silent heart conforms his own.
 Your marriage shall unite two distant worlds;
 For when the stern repiner at our law
 Sees in your arms the daughter of his king,
 With humbler spirit, and with heart less fierce,
 His willing neck shall court the yoke he scorn'd.—
 But look, where Ezmont comes!—Retire, my son;
 And leave me to complete the task begun. [Exit Car.

Enter Ezmont.

—Welcome, my friend; your council, or command,
 Has left, I hope, Alzira well resolv'd.

Ez. Great father of the friendless!—Pardon yet,

If one, whose sword seem'd fatal to her race,
 Keeps her heart cold, with some remains of horror!
 We move with ling'ring steps to those we fear.
 But prejudice will fly before your voice,
 Whose winning manners consecrate your laws.
 To you who gave us heaven, our earth is due.
 Yours our new being, our enlighten'd souls;
 Spain may hold realms by purchase of her sword;
 And worlds may yield to power—but we to virtue.
 Your bloody nation's unsucceeding pride
 Had made their God disgustful as their crimes!
 We saw him hateful in their murderous zeal;
 But lov'd him in your mercy.—From your heart
 His influence stream'd accepted; and my crown,
 My daughter, and my soul, became your slaves.
 Father alike of Carlos and of me,
 I give him my Alzira for your sake;
 And with her all Potofi and Peru.
 Summon the reverend choir; prepare the rites;
 And trust my promise for my daughter's will.

Alv. Bless'd be the long-wish'd found!—This
 great work past,

I shall go down in peace, and hail my grave.
 Oh, thou Great Leader! whose almighty hand
 Drew the dark veil aside that hid new worlds;
 Smile on this union, which, confirm'd by thee,
 Shall in one empire grasp the circled globe,
 And talk the sun's whole round to measure Spain!
 Ezmont, farewell—I go to greet my son,
 With welcome news, how much he owes my friend.

[Exit.

Ex. [Alone.] Thou, nameless Power, unequal'd
 and alone!

Whose dreadful vengeance overwhelm'd, at once,
 My country, and her gods, too weak to save!
 Protect my failing years from new distress.
 Robb'd of my all; but this one daughter left me;
 Oh, guard her heart, and guide her to be bless'd!—

Enter Alzira.

Daughter, be happy, while good-fortune courts thee;
 And in thy blessing cheer thy country's hope.
 Protect the vanquish'd; rule the victor's will;
 Seize the bent thunder in his lifted hand;
 And from despair's low seat, remount a throne.
 Lend the lov'd public thy reluctant heart;
 And in the joy of millions find thy own.
 Nay, do not weep, Alzira! tears will now
 Seem insults; and reproach thy father's care.

Al. Sir, my whole soul, devoted, feels your power:
 Yet, if Alzira's peace was ever dear,
 Shut not your ear to my despairing grief;
 But, in my nuptials, read my certain doom.

Ex. Urge it no more: it is an ill-tim'd sorrow.
 Away! I had thy kind consent before.

Al. No—you compell'd the frightful sacrifice:
 And, ah, remorseless Heaven!—at what a time!
 When the rais'd sword of this all-murdering lover
 Hangs o'er my people's heads with threat'ning sway,
 To strike the trembling remnant from my sight,
 And mark my nuptial day a day of death!
 Omens on omens have pronounc'd it curs'd.

Ex. Quit these vain fears, these superstitious dreams
 Of unconfiding ignorance! What day?
 What omens?—We ourselves, who chuse our acts,
 Make our own days, or happy, or accurs'd.

Al. 'Twas on this day, the pride of all our state,
 Zamor the great, the warlike Zamor fell;
 Zamor, my lover, and your purpos'd son.

Ex. Zamor was brave; and I have mourn'd his
 But the cold grave dissolves e'en lovers' vows. [fall-
 Bear to the altar, then, a heart resolv'd:
 And let thy summon'd virtue check thy weakness.
 Was not thy soul enroll'd a christian lately?

The awful Power that lent those christians name,
Speaks in my voice; commands thee to be won.
Hear him; and learn obedience to his will.

Al. Alas, my father! spare this dreadful zeal.
Has not the parent spoke? Why speaks the God?

I know, and I confess, a father's power;
At his command to sacrifice the life
He gave me, is a duty nature taught.
But my obedience passes nature's bounds;
Whate'er I see, is with my father's eyes;
Whate'er I love, is for my father's sake;
I chang'd my very gods, and took my father's;
Yet has this father, piously severe,

Wrong'd my believing weakness, and undone me.
He told me to compose my troubled heart,
Peace held her dwelling at the altar's foot.
He told me, that religion cur'd despair,
And soften'd every pang that pierc'd the soul:
But, ah, 'twas all deceit! all dear delusion!
Mix'd with the image of an awful God,
A human image struggles in my heart,
And checks my willing virtue in it's rising.
Zamor, though dead to nature, lives to love.
Zamor still triumphs in Alzira's breast,
Lord of her soul, and holds back all her wishes.

You frown.—Alas, you blame a guilt you caus'd.
Quench then this flame, too hard for death and time;
And force me to be his whom most I hate.

If my lov'd country bids, I must obey;
Yet, while by force you join unsocial hands,
Tremble when'er you drag me to the altar,
Tremble to hear my tongue deceive my God:
To hear me to this hated tyrant vow
A heart, that beats, unchang'd, another's due.

Ex. Alas, my child, what unweigh'd words are
Pity my age, unfit for length'ning woes: [these!
Nature asks rest: pity these falling tears.
By all our fates, that all depend on thee,
Let me conjure thee to be blest'st thyself,
Nor close in misery my life's last scene.

Why do I live, but to redeem thy hopes?
For thy own sake, not mine, assist my care.
Blast not the ripening prospect of thy peace,
Hard, and with labour'd patience, slowly grown.
Now, on thy instant choice, depends thy fate!
Nor only thine, but a whole people's fate!
Wilt thou betray them? Have they other help?
Have they a hope, but thee!—Think, think, Alzira;
And nobly lose thyself to save a state. [E. 11.

Al. Cruel accomplishment! sublime defect!
So feign we virtues to become a throne,
Till public duty drowns our private youth.

Enter Don Carlos.

D. Car. Princess, you give a lover cause to doubt,
That this long labour of your slow consent
Springs from a heart too cold to feel his flame.
While, for your sake, suspended law forbears
To punish rebels, whom you wish to save,
Ungrateful, you compel a nation's freedom,
And bind, in recompence, my chains more close!
Yet misconceive me not.—I would not owe
A softened sentiment to having serv'd you;
That were to bribe a heart my pride wou'd win.
I shou'd with mingled joy and blushes gain you,
If, as my perquisite of power you sell.
Let me attract, not force you.—I would owe you,
All to yourself; nor could I taste a joy,
That, in your giving it, might cost you pain.

Al. Join, Sir, my fruitless prayers to angry Heav'n!
This dreadful day comes charg'd with pains for both.
—No wonder you detect my troubled soul:
It bursts unvail'd from my disclosing eyes,
And glows on every feature's honest air.

Such is the plainness of an Indian heart;
That it disdains to sculk behind the tongue;
But throws out all it's wrongs, and all it's rage.
She who can hide her purpose, can betray;
And that's a christian virtue I've not learnt.

D. Car. I love your frankness, but reproach it's
Zamor, remember'd Zamor, speaks in this. [cause.
With hatred stretch'd beyond th' extent of life,
He crosses from the tomb, his conq'r's will;
And felt through death revenge's rival love.
Cesse to complain, and you may learn to bear.
My fame, your duty, both require a change;
And I must wish it were from tears to joy.

Al. A rival's grave should bury jealousy.
But whence your right to censure sorrow for him?
I lov'd him; I proclaim it. Had I not,
I had been blind to sense, and lost to reason.
Zamor was all the prop of our fallen world;
And, but he lov'd me much, confess'd no weakness!
Had I not mourn'd a fate he not deserv'd,
I had deserv'd the fate he felt unjustly.
For you—be proud no more; but dare be honest.
Far from presuming to reproach my tears,
Honour my constancy, and praise my virtues:
Cease to regret the dues I pay the dead;
And merit, if you can, a heart thus faithful. [Exit.

D. Car. [Alone.] Spite of my fruitless passion, I
Her pride, thus starting it's sincere disdain, [confess,
Astonishes my thought, and charms my anger.
—What then shall I resolve?—Must it cost more
To tame one female heart than all Peru!
Nature, adapting her to suit her climate,
Left her all savage, yet all shuning too!
But 'tis my duty to be master here;
Where, she alone excepted, all obey.
Since then too faintly I her heart incline,
I'll force her stubborn hand, and fix her mine.

A C T II.

Zamor, and Four Indian Captains, in Chains.

Za. FRIENDS, who have dar'd beyond the
strength of mortals;
Whose courage scorn'd restraint, and grew in danger;
Associates in my hopes and my misfortunes!
Since we have lost our vengeance, let death find us!
Why should we longer be condemn'd to life,
Defenceless to our country and Alzira?
Yet why should Spanish Carlos' scape our swords?
Why thrive beneath a weight of uncheck'd crimes?
And why has Heaven forsaken us and virtue?
Ye strengthless powers! whose altars smok'd in vain?
Gods of a faithful, yet a cheated people!
Why have you thus betray'd us to the foe?
Why had six hundred Spanish vagrants power
To crush my throne, your temples, rites, and you?
Where are your altars? where my glories now?
Where is Alzira? more herself a god,
Than your collected queens of fancied heaven!
Helpless once more thou seest me—lost Peru!
O'er shifting sands, through deserts, cross'd in vain,
From forest wilds, impervious to the sun;
From the world's wastes, beneath the burning zone,
I brought thee unhop'd aid! the wond'ring stars
Beheld me gath'ring from remotest wilds,
New strength, new prospects, and new means to die!
Your arms, your furtherance, your vast support,
New-furnish'd my desires, and wing'd my hope.
Vengeance and love once more had mann'd my heart.
But, ah, how vain that hope! how lost that vengeance!
The slaves of avarice are honour's masters!

In. Capt. Why left we in the neighb'ring woods
our forces?

Why dar'd we pais too bold their guarded gates,
Alone, and unsupported—rash discoverers? [depth,

Za. Seiz'd but this morning from our dungeon's
Th' infernal murderers have hither brought us,
Unknowing to what death, though sure to die.
Yet it o'erjoys me, we have met once more.
But where? what place is this? Has none yet heard
Who governs here? what fate Alzira found?
Whether her father is, like us, their slave?
Dear, wretched friends, who share a death, my due,
Can none instruct me what I wish to know?

In. Capt. From sep'rate prisons hither led, like you,
Through different streets we came, the cause not
All uninform'd of what you seek to learn. [known:
Great, but unhappy prince! deserving long
A nobler fate! our silent souls lament
Our want of power to save so lov'd a leader.
Now to die with you is our noblest claim,
Since to die for you was a choice denied us.

Za. Next the wish'd glory of success in war,
The greatest is to die, and die renown'd.
But to die noteless, in the shameful dark,
To die, and leave in chains our suff'ring country!
To fall, undignified, by villains' hands,
The sacrifice of Europe's outcast bloodhounds!
Horrid with others wounds, and poorly rich,
With others plunder'd treasure; die by butchers!
Blood-rain'd insulters of a yielded world!
Riflers, who gave me up to tire their tortures,
But for discovery of the gold I scorn'd,
As dross, less valued, and less wish'd than they!
To be in death the cause of my friend's dying!
To die, and leave Alzira to my murderers!
This is a death of horror, not of fame!
This is the body's death—but shakes the soul!

Enter Alvarez, with a Guard of Spaniards.

Alv. Live, and be free.

[Spanish Soldiers unfetter the Indians.

Za. Ye gods of lost Peru!

What do I hear!—said he, Be free, and live?

What vast mysterious accident of virtue?

Some power divine, in sport, deceives my wonder!

Thou seem'st a Spaniard!—and—but thou forgivest,

I cou'd have sworn thee christian!—Who? what art

Art thou some god? or this new city's king? [thou?

Alv. Christian I am; and Spaniard: but no king.

Yet serves my power to save the weak, distress'd.

Za. What thy distinction then? thou gen'rous
wonder!

Alv. The love of pity, when the wretched want it.

Za. Pity! and christian!—what inspir'd thy great—

Alv. My memory, my duty, and my God. [ness?

Za. Thy God?—Perhaps, then, these insatiate
wasters,

These human seemers, with but forms of men;

These thirsters after only gold and blood;

From some coarse, lawless part of Europe came,

And serve some bloodier god that wars with thine?

Alv. Their faith the same with mine, but not
their nature:

Christians by birth, by error made unchristian,

In power grown giddy, they disgrace command.

Thou know'st their faults too well: now, know my
duty.

Twice has the sun's broad traverse girt the globe,

Twice wheel'd the summer round your world and ours,

Since a brave Indian, native of your land,

To whom surprise in ambush made me captive,

Gave me the forfeit life his sword had won.

The unexpected mercy forc'd my blushes:

For, I perceiv'd, compassion of your woes;

Was but a duty, when I thought 'twas virtue.

Thenceforth, your countrymen became my brothers;

And I have now but one complaint against them;

—That I must never know his name who sav'd me.

Za. He has Alvarez's voice! He has his features!

His age the same too; and the same his story!

'Tis he!—there is no other honest christian.

Look on us all; and recollect his face,

Who wisely spar'd thy life to spread thy virtues.

Alv. Come nearer, noble youth.—By Heaven, 'tis

Now, my dim eyes, you teach me my decay, [he!

That cou'd not let me see my wish indulg'd,

But clouded e'en my gratitude!—My son!

My benefactor! Saviour of my age!

What can I do! Instruct me to deserve thee.

Dwell in my sight; and I will be thy father.

Thou wilt have lost the merit of thy gift,

If, from the power it gave, thou claim'st no payment.

Za. Trust me, my father, had thy Spanish sons

Shewn but a glimmering of thy awful virtue,

Grateful Peru, now detestably theirs,

Had been a peopled world of willing slaves.

But cruelty, and pride, and plunder, claim them.

Rather than live among that felon race,

Hide, hide me, silent death; and screen my soul

From the relentless rage of unfeeling curser.

All I wou'd ask, all I will take from Spain,

Is but to be inform'd, if Ezmont lives? [der?

Or, has his blood new-stain'd their hands with mur-

Ezmont?—perhaps you knew him not?—That Ez-

Who was Alzira's father?—I must stop, [mont,

And weep—before I dare go on, to ask—

Whether—that father—and that daughter—live?

Alv. Hide not thy tears: weep boldly—and be

To give the flowing virtue manly way; [proud

'Tis nature's mark to know an honest heart by.

Shame on those breasts of stone, that cannot melt,

In soft adoption of another's sorrow.

But be thou comforted; for both thy friends

Live, and are happy here.

Za. And shall I see 'em? [friend

Alv. Ezmont, within this hour, shall teach his

To live, and hope—and be as bless'd as he.

Za. Alzira's Ezmont?—

Alv. From his mouth, not mine,

Thou shalt, this moment, learn what'er thou seek'st.

He shall instruct thee in a smiling charge,

That has united Spain with sav'd Peru.

I have a son to bless with this new joy:

He will partake my happiness, and love thee.

I quit thee—but will instantly return

To charm thee with this union's happy story,

That nothing now on earth has power to sever—

Yet, which once clos'd, shall quiet warring worlds.

[Exit, with Guards.

Za. At length, th' awak'ning gods remember Za—

And to atone my wrongs, by working wonders, [mor,

Have made a Spaniard honest to reward me!

Alvarez is himself the christians' god;

Who long provok'd, and blushing at their crimes,

In his own right descends, to veil their shame.

He says, he has a son; that son shall be

My brother, if, at least, he does but prove

Worthy (cou'd man be so) of such a father!

Oh, day! Oh, dawn of hope, on my sad heart!

Ezmont, now, after three long years of woe,

Ezmont, Alzira's father, is restor'd me!

Alzira too, the dear, the gen'rous maid,

She, whom my fighting soul has been at work for!

She, who has made me brave, and left me wretched!

Alzira too is here! and lives to thank me.

Enter Ezmont.

—Oh, ye profuse rewarders of my pain!

He comes! my Ezmont comes!--Spring of my hopes,
Thou father of my lab'ring mind's inspirer!
Hard let me press thee to a heart that loves thee.
Escap'd from death, behold returning Zamor.
He will not, cannot die, while there is hope,
That he may live to serve a suff'ring friend.
Speak, speak; and be thy first soft word Alzira!
Say, she is here; and bless'd, as Heaven can make
her.

Ex. Unhappy prince!—She lives; nor lives re-
Words cannot reach description of her grief, [mote.
Since first the news of thy sad death was brought her.
Long dwelt she, sorrowing, o'er an empty tomb,
Which, for thy fancied form, she rais'd to weep on.
But thou still liv'st!—amazing chance!--thou liv'st!
Heav'n grant some doubtful means to bless thee long,
And make thy life as happy—as 'tis strange!
—What brought thee hither, Zamor?

Zs. Cruel question!
Colder than all the deaths I have escap'd from!
Why dost thou ask? Where else cou'd I have hop'd
To find, and to redeem thyself and daughter?

Ex. Say that no more—'tis misery to hear thee.

Zs. Bethink thee of the black, the direful day,
When that vile Spaniard, Carlos, curse the name!
Invulnerable, or to sword or shame,
O'erturn'd those walls, which time, when young,
saw built,

By earth attracted, children of the sun.
Perish his name! and, oh! be curs'd my fate,
Who yet no nearer brought him than to thought,
In horror of his murders! 'Twas the wretch,
Who bears that name of Carlos, blasted all.
'Twas in that name, pillage and slaughter spread!
'Twas in that name, they dragg'd Alzira from me;
Buried in dust the temples of our gods;
And stain'd with the surrounding off'rer's blood
Their violated altars! The shock'd pow'r,
That smil'd expectant on our marriage-vow,
Rush'd back, and press'd in vain his brother gods,
To vindicate their empire. —Spain's dark power
Prevail'd; and I was captive led to Carlos.
I will not terrify thy pitying breast,
I will not tell thee, to what tort'ring pain,
That villain Spaniard's avarice condemn'd me.
Condemn'd me, Ezmont, for the sake of gold!
Gold, the divinity of beggar Spain,
And our neglected refuse!—'Tis enough,
To tell thee, that amidst their tortures left,
And seeming dead, they, tir'd, not satisfied,
Forbore, because I felt not—I reviv'd,
To feel, once more, but never to forget,
The grindings of their insult. Three long years
Have lent me friends, and hopes, and arms, for
vengeance.

Close ambush'd in the neighb'ring woods they lie,
Sworn the revengers of their bleeding country.

Ex. Alas! my heart compassionates thy wrongs:
But do not seek a ruin that wou'd shun thee.
What can thy flint-arm'd Indians courage do?
What their weak arrows, spoils of fishes bones?
How can thy naked, untrai'd warriors, conquer?
Unequally oppos'd to iron-men:
To woundless bosoms coated o'er with safety!
And arm'd with missile thunders in their hand,
That stream deaths on us swifter than the winds!
No—since the world, they say, has yielded to 'em,
Yield Zamor and Peru, and let 'em reign.

Zs. Let the world yield—Zamor will always find
some generous corper in it, fit for freedom.
Had I been born to serve, obedience claims
returns of benefit and due protection:
outrage and wrongs require correction only.

These lightnings and these thunders; these safe
Cafes for fear, which guard their iron war; [shells,
These fiery steeds, that tear the trampled earth,
And hurl their headlong riders on the foe;
These outward forms of death, that fright the world,
I can look stedfast on; and dare despise.

The novelty once lost, the force will fail.
Curse on our feeble gold! it calls in foes,
Yet helps not to repel the wrongs it draws!
Oh, had but steel been ours!—but partial Heaven
Has, with that manly wealth, enrich'd our foe!
Yet, not to leave our vengeance quite disarm'd,
Depriving us of steel, it gave us virtue. [chang'd.

Ex. Virtue was bless'd of old—but—times are

Zs. No matter—let us keep our hearts the same.

Alzira cannot change—Alzira's just.

Alzira's faithful to her vows and me.—

Save me, ye gods! from a friend's downcast eye!

Whence are those sighs and tears?

Ex. Too wretched Zamor!

Zs. I thought myself Alzira's father's son;

But find these tyrants have unking'd thy soul; [me.

And taught thee, on the grave's last edge, to wrong

Ex. They cannot. 'Tis an art I will not learn.

Nor are our conquerors all unjust—for, know,

'Twas Heaven induc'd these christians to our clime,

Less to subdue, and rule us, than instruct.

Know, they brought with them virtues, here un-

Secrets immortal, that preserve the soul! [found:

The science of salvation by belief!

The art of living bless'd, and dying safe!

Zs. Or I am deaf; or, wou'd to Heaven, I were!

But, if I heard thee right, thou seem'st to praise

These pilfering zealots, who usurp thy throne,

And wou'd convert thy daughter to a slave!

Ex. Alzira is no slave.

Zs. Ah!—Royal Ezmont!

Pardon some transport, which despair inflam'd;

And, to great woes, indulge a little warmth.

Remember, she was mine by solemn vow;

By thy own oath, before our altar sworn;

Honour and perjury can never meet.

Ex. What are our altars? what our idol gods?

Phantoms of human coinage, fear'd no more!

I would not wish to hear thee cite their name.

Zs. What! was our fathers altars vain deceit?

Ex. It was; and I have happily disclaim'd it.

May the great single Power, that rules whole heavens,

Lend thy dark heart one ray of truth divine!

May'st thou, unhappy Zamor, learn to know,

And, knowing, to confess, in Europe's right,

Her god should be ador'd, her sons obey'd!

Zs. Obey'd! Hell blast 'em!—What! these sons

of rapine?

They have not robb'd thee of thy faith alone,

But pilfer'd even thy reason!—Yet, 'twas wise,

When thou wou'd'st keep no vows, to own no gods.

But, tell me—is Alzira too forsworn?

True to her father's weakness has she fallen?

Serves she the gods of christians?

Ex. Hapless youth!

Though bless'd in my own change, I weep for thine.

Zs. He who betrays his friend, has cause for weep.

Yet tears, they say, shew pity—if they do, [ing.

Pity this torment, which thy shame has cost me.

Pity my heart, at once alarm'd, for heaven,

For heav'n betray'd, like me; and torn at once,

By love, and zeal, and vengeance.—Take me, Car-

Drag me to die at my Alzira's feet; [los;

And I will sigh away a soul, she saves not.

But have a care—be cautious, ere I fall,

Of urging me, too rashly, to despair.

Resume a human heart! and feel some virtue.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. My lord, the ceremonies wait your presence.

Ez. Farewel—I follow thee.

Za. No, by my wrongs!

I will not quit this hold, till I have learnt,
What ceremony, what black purpose, waits thee?

Ez. Away—be counsell'd—fly this fatal city.

Za. Not though the christian power that blasts
my love,

Shou'd rain down lightnings on my destin'd head,
And my own gods cry'd, Stay, I still would follow
thee.

Ez. Forgive the force of an unwith'd refusal.—

Guards, to your care I must commit this madman.

Restrain him—He would violate our altar.

These Pagans, obstinate in idol zeal,

Malign our holy myst'ries, and profane

The church's solemn service.—Guard the doors.

'Tis not in right of my own power I speak;

But, Carlos, in my voice, commands your care.

[*E. it, with Guards, after they have freed him
from Zamor.*]

Za. Did I not hear him, friends?—or am I mad?

Did I not hear him use the name of Carlos?

Oh, treachery! Oh, baseness! Oh, my wrongs!

Oh, last, uncredited, reproach of nature!

Ezmont commands for Carlos?—'Twas not Ezmont:

'Twas that black devil, that scares the christian

Lyed in his shape, to scandalize Peru! [*cowards,*

Oh, virtue! thou art banish'd from mankind:

E'en from Alzira's heart, thou now art fled.

—These villain bart'ers rob us not of gold,

They pay it's fatal price, in morals ruin'd.

Detested Carlos, then is here!—Oh, friends!

What council? what resource? to stop despair.

In. Capt. Let not my prince condemn the faith-
ful zeal,

That would advise his sorrows.—Old Alvarez

Will straight return, and bring, perhaps, that son,

With whom to share his joy the good man hasten'd.

Urge him to see you safe without their gates:

Then suddenly rejoin your ambush'd friends,

And march, more equal, to your purpos'd vengeance.

Let us not spare a life, but good Alvarez,

And this lov'd son! I, near the wall, remark'd

Their arts, and modes of structure: mark'd their
angles,

Deep ditch, broad bulwarks, and their sleeping
thunders.

I saw, and weigh'd it all: and found hope strongest.

Our groaning fathers, brothers, sons, and friends,

In fetter'd labour toil, to house their spoilers.

These, when we march to their unhop'd relief,

Will rise, within the town, behind their masters:

While you, meanwhile, without, advance against
them:

And, o'er our dying bodies, proudly heap'd,

Bridge a bold entrance o'er their bloody rampart:

There, may we turn, against their tyrant heads,

Those fiery mouths of death, those storms of murder,

Those forms, that frightening honest, artless bravery,

Build, on our ignorance, a throne for wrongs.

Za. Illustrious wretchedness! by Heaven, it
charms me,

To see those soaring souls out-tower their fortune.

Shall we—yes, still we shall!—recover empire;

Carlos shall feel Peru, despis'd Peru, [ment.

Knock'd at his trembling heart, and claim atone-

Come, dire revenge! thou melancholy god!

That comfort'st the distress'd with shadowy hopes!

Strengthen our willing hands: let Carlos die!

Let but that Spanish murderer, Carlos, die,

And I am half repaid my kingdom's losses!

But we are wretches, indolently brave:

We talk of vengeance; and we sleep in chains!

Alvarez has forgot me; Ezmont flights me;

And she I love is theirs whom most I hate.

All the poor comfort of my heart is doubting.

Hark! what surprising noise! [*Shout.*] It rises
louder;

And sudden fires, high-flaming, double day!

Hark!—from their iron throats, [*Guns.*] yon roar.
ing mischiefs

Pour their triumphant insult. [*Trumpets, &c.*]
What new feast,

Or what new crime, demands this swell of joy?

Now, in their heedless mirth, descend some god;

And teach us to be free; or, failing, die.

'Tis liberty alone, that makes life dear:

He does not live at all, who lives to fear.

ACT III.

Alzira alone.

SHADE of my murder'd lover! shun to view me:

Rise to the stars, and make their brightness

But shed no gleam of lustre on Alzira. [sweeter;

She has betray'd her faith, and married Carlos!

The sea, that roll'd it's wat'ry world betwixt us,

Fail'd to divide our hands—and he has reach'd me!

The altar trembled at th' unhallow'd touch;

And Heaven drew back, reluctant, at our meeting.

Oh, thou soft-hoivering ghost, that haunt'st my fancy!

Thou dear and bloody form, that skims before me!

Thou never-dying, yet thou buried Zamor!

If sighs and tears have power to pierce the grave;

If death, that knows no pity, will but hear me;

If still thy gentle spirit loves Alzira:

Pardon, that even in death, the dar'd forsake thee!

Pardon her rigid sense of nature's duties:

A parent's will!—a pleading country's safety!

At these strong calls, the sacrific'd her love;

To joyless glory, and to tasteless peace!

And to an empty world, in which thou art not!

Oh, Zamor! Zamor! follow me no longer.

Drop some dark veil, snatch some kind cloud before
thee,

Cover that conscious face, and let death hide thee!

Leave me to suffer wrongs that Heaven allots me:

And teach my busy fancy to forget thee.

Enter Emira.

Where are those captives?—Are they free, Emira?

Where those sad children of my mournful country?

Will they not suffer me to see, to hear them?

To sit and weep, and mingle with their mournings?

Emi. Ah, rather dread the rage of angry Carlos,

Who threatens 'em with some new stroke of horror.

Some cruel purpose hangs, this moment, o'er 'em!

For, through this window look, and see display'd

The broad red standard, that betokens blood;

Loud bursts of death roar from their iron prisons,

And answer, dreadful, to each other's call! [*Guns.*

The council hastes, alarm'd, and meets in uproar.
[*Shouts.*

All I have heard besides is, that the prince,

Your father, has been summon'd to attend.

Al. Immortal Guardian of th' endanger'd just!

Have I for this, in vain, betray'd my peace?

Dares the dire husband, recent from the altar,

New to my forc'd consent—and scarce yet lord

Of my repenting hand; so soon let loose

His recommission'd murders! Must my nuptials

Serve as the prelude to my people's blood!

Oh, marriage! marriage! what a curse is thine,

Where hands alone consent, and hearts abhor!

Enter Cephania.

Ceph. One of the captive Indians, just set free,
In honour of the joy that crowns this day,
Prays your permission, Madam, to be heard,
And at your princely feet disclose some secret.

Al. Let him, with firmness, and with freedom en-
For him, and for his friends, he knows I live. [ter.
Dear to my eyes, I mark 'em with delight,
And love, alas! in them, their poor lost country.
—But why alone?—Why one?

Ceph. It is that captain,
To whose victorious hand, I heard, but now,
Alvarez, your new lord's illustrious father,
Ow'd his remitted life, from Indians sav'd.

Emi. With earnest pressure, he has sought your
presence:

He met me entering, and with trembling haste,
Implor'd me to befriend th' important prayer.
He told me, farther, that the prince your father,
For some strange cause, this Indian seems to know,
Had charg'd the guards he 'scap'd from, to prevent
His access to your ear—Methinks, there fits
A kind of sullen greatness on his brow,
As if it veil'd, in grief, some awful purpose.

Ceph. I watch'd him—and he walks, and turns,
and weeps:

Then starts, and looks at heaven; and to the gods,
Pours up an ardent sigh, that breathes your name!
I pitied him—but, gather'd, from this freedom,
That he's a stranger to your rank and greatness.

Al. What rank? What greatness?—Perish all
distinction,

That, from the wrong'd unhappy, bars the great!
Who knows, but this was once some gen'rous friend,
Some brave companion of my Zamor's arms!

Who knows, but he was near him, when he fell;
And brings some message from his parting soul!
How dare I then receive him?—Can my heart
Be proof against the last kind words of Zamor?

Will not the half-lull'd pain, rekindling fresh,
Burn, with increase of smart, and wring my soul?

—No matter—let him enter.— [Exit Cephania.
—Ha, what means

This sudden chillness, sadd'ning round my heart,
In poor faint flut'nings never felt before!

Ah, fatal residence!—From the first hour
These hated walls became Alzira's prison,

Each different moment brought some different pain.

Enter Zamor.

Za. Art thou, at length, restor'd me?—Cruel! tell
Art thou, indeed, Alzira? [me]

Al. Gentle spirit!—
Forgive me.—Do not come to chide th' unhappy!

I have been wrong'd; but— [Faints into his arms.

Za. Thine, she wou'd have said;
And her imperfect purpose fully blest'd me.

Revive, thou dearest, loveliest, lost Alzira!
Zamor will live no longer, should'st thou die.

Al. The kind, forgiving shade, is still before me!
It wak'd me, by a sound, that seem'd his name.

Za. I am no shadow, if Alzira's mine;
am thy living lover, at thy feet [Kneeling.

Reclaiming thee, thou noblest half himself!
Al. Can it be possible, thou should'st be Zamor?

Za. Thy Zamor—thing.
Al. But—art thou sure, thou liv'st?

Za. 'Tis in thy power,
To make that truth undoubted.—Do but say

Thou wou'd'st not have me die—and I will live,
To thank thee thus with everlasting love.

[Rises, and catches her in his arms.
Al. Oh, days of softness!—Oh, remembered years,

Of ever-vanish'd happiness!—Oh, Zamor!

Why has the grave been bountiful too late?

Why sent thee back in vain? to make joy bitter;

By mix'd ideas of distracting horror!

Ah, Zamor!—What a time is this—to charm in!

Thy every word, and look, shoots daggers through

Za. Then mourn'st thou my return? [me.

Al. I do—I do.

Because—it was no sooner.

Za. Generous tenderness!

Al. Where hast thou been, thus long, unknown,
till now?

Za. A wand'ring vagabond, that trod the world,
In fruitless search of means to save Alzira.

Not all the tort'ring racks of villain Carlos,

Cou'd from my panting heart expel Alzira.

The bloody spoiler tir'd his rage in vain:

I brav'd his wounds and insults.—Life had yet

No leisure to forsake me. Thou requir'st me.

The groans of suffering nations reach'd my soul,

And bade it struggle to revenge mankind.

Alas, thou tremblest! Thy soft nature shrinks,

At bare recital of these Spanish virtues.

Doubtless, the guardian god that smiles on love,

Knew thy kind wish—and, for thy sake, sustain'd me.

And thou wilt thank, I know, his gentle goodness.

Thy pious heart disdains to quit thy gods,

Because they suffer with thee; and have fail'd

To stem th' invading host of Spain's new heav'n!

Thou hast too little falsehood for a Spaniard.—

Hast thou e'er heard of a base wretch, call'd Carlos?

A birth that blackens nature! a taught monster!

Sent, in our shape, from some far distant world,

To humble ours, with sense of human baseness!

They tell me, he is here.—Grant Heav'n thou
knowest him!

Thou then shalt guide my vengeance—to this first,
And vilest of it's victims.

Al. Find him, here— [reach him.

Black in my breast, he lives: strike, strike, and
Za. Hold, heart—and break not yet—This
may be—pity.

Al. Strike—for—I merit neither life—nor thee.
Za. Esmont, I feel thee; and believe thee all!

Al. Did he then tell thee?—Had my father power
To dwell so sadly on his hopeless woes,

As to describe 'em to thee?—Did he name

The dreadful husband—his lost daughter owes him?

Za. No—but thou may'st: for that will harden *Za.*
That he shall never be astonish'd more! [mor,

Al. Yes—I will tell it thee—Prepare to tremble!

Not for thyself to tremble—but for me.

I will lay open the vast horror to thee:

Then thou wilt weep and live—and bid me—die.
Za. Alzira!—Oh!

Al. This Carlos—

Za. Carlos!

Al. He—

I was this morning sworn for ever—his!

Za. Sworn whose?—not Carlos?

Al. I have been betray'd.

I was too weak alone—against my country—

—Even on this fatal, this foreboding day,

Almost within thy sight, christian Alzira

Plighted, in presence of the christian God,

Her hapless hand to Carlos.—'Tis a crime

That hopes no pardon!—All my gods renounc'd!

My lover wrong'd! my country's fame betray'd!

All, all, demand revenge.—Do thou then kill me!

Thou wilt strike tenderly—and my glad blood
Shall meet thy dear-lov'd hand—and that way
join thee.

Za. Carlos Alzira's husband!—'tis impossible!

B

Al. Were I dispos'd to mitigate my crime,
I cou'd alledge a father's awful power;
I cou'd remind thee of our ruin'd state:
And plead my tears, my struggles, and distraction,
Till three long wretched years confirm'd thee dead.
I cou'd, with justice, charge my faith renounc'd
On hatred of those gods, who sav'd not Zamor.
But I disclaim excuse—to shun remission.
Love finds me guilty; and that guilt condemns me.
Since thou art safe, no matter what I suffer.
When life has lost the joys that make it blest'd,
—The shortest liver is the happiest always.
Why dost thou view me with so kind an eye?
Thou should'st look sternly, and retract all pity.

Za. No—if I still am lov'd, thou art not guilty.
—Wishing me blest'd, methinks thou mak'st me so.

Al. When, by my father urg'd, and by Alvarez,
And inly too impell'd, perhaps, to fate,
By some forsaken god, who meant revenge;
When by the christian's fears, and my touch'd heart,
At once beset, they dragg'd me to the temple,
Even in the moment when advancing Carlos
Sought my escaping hand, though I then thought
Dead, and for ever lost to my fond hopes; [thee
Yet then, beneath the altar's sacred gloom,
I bow'd my soul to Zamor: memory
Reliev'd me with thy image.—Indians, Spaniards,
All, all have heard, how ardently I lov'd thee.
'Twas my heart's pride to boast it to the world!
To earth, to heav'n—to Carlos, I proclaim'd it!
And now, e'en now, in this distressful moment,
For the last time—I tell thyself, I love thee.

Za. For the last time! Avert the menace,
Heav'n!

Art thou at once restor'd—and lost again!

'Tis not love's language, this!—Alas, Alzira!

Al. Oh, Heaven!—Alvarez comes, and with
him Carlos.

Enter Don Alvarez, followed by Don Carlos.

Alv. See! with Alzira there, my life's restorer!
Approach, young hero! 'tis my son who seeks thee;
Spain's delegate, who here holds power supreme:
My Carlos, bids thee share his bridal joy.
—Meet, and embrace: divide your father's love:
My son, of nature, one—and one of choice.

Za. Nam'd he not Carlos?—Perish such a son
As the detested Carlos!

Al. Heaven avert

The rising tempest, that o'erwhelms my soul!

Alv. What means this wonder?

Za. 'Tis not possible!—

No—I wou'd disbelieve attesting gods,
Shou'd they, from heaven, assert this shock to nature;
That such a father—can—have such a son!

D. Car. [To Zamor.] Slave!—from what spring
does thy blind fury rise?

Know'st thou not who I am?

Za. Thou art—a villain.

My country's horror—and whole nature's shame!
Among the scourges whom just Heaven has left thee,
Know me, for Zamor.

D. Car. Thou Zamor?

Alv. Zamor!

Za. Yes—the tortur'd Zamor.

Blush to be told it; and remember, with it,
The bloody rage of thy remorseless cruelty;
That basely dar'd insult a yielded captive!
Now he returns—triumphant in distress,
To look thee into shame: to see those eyes
Fall their stretch'd fierceness, and decline before him.
Thou waster of the world! Thou licens'd robber!
Thou whose last spoil was my Alzira's glory!

Win her against this sword—[Draws.]—the sole
good gain

Zamor can boast he owes thy haughty country!
Now the same hand, that gave the father life,
Claims, in return, the son's devoted blood:
And, so reveng'd, atones a dying realm.

Alv. Confounded and amaz'd, I hear him speak;
And every word grows stranger!—Carlos cannot
Be guilty—or, if guilty, cannot answer.

D. Car. To answer, is a poorness I despise.
Where rebels dare accuse, should power reply,
'Twou'd but forget to punish.—With this sword,
I might; but that I know the reverence due
To your protecting presence, well have answer'd.
—Madam, your heart shou'd have instructed you,

[To Alzira.

Why you offend me, while I see you here.

If not my peace, at least your fame, demands
That you now drive this outlaw from your thoughts.
You weep then! and insult me with your tears!
And yet I love, and can be jealous of you!

Al. Cruel! [To Carlos.] and you, my father, and
protector!

[To Alvarez.

And thou! my soul's past hope, in happier times!

[To Zamor.

Mark—and condole my fate.—Mix your due pity
And tremble, at the horror of my woes.

Behold this lover, which my father chose me;

Before I knew there was a world, but ours.

With his reported death our empire fell:

And I have liv'd to see my father's throne

O'erturn'd; and all things chang'd in earth and

By every human help, alas! forsaken, [heav'n!

At length, my father, from the christian's God

Sought help, and screen'd a state, behind his name.

Compell'd before this unknown power, to kneel,

A dreadful oath has bound my backward soul,

To love the murd'rer of my real lover!

In my new faith, I own myself unskill'd,

But all that virtue taught me, that I know —

Zamor, I love thee justly—I confess it.

What duty calls for, can deserve no shame.

Yet, where my soul is bound, my heart obeys:

And I can now be thine, alas! no more.

Let me be wretched, rather than unjust.—

Carlos, for you—I am your wife, and victim:

Yet, in abhorrence of your cruel heart,

I hold my hand divorc'd—and hence abjure you.

One way to either, I submit with joy:

If your swords claim me, I am due to both.

Which will reward me with the death I wish?—

Carlos, thou hast a hand already stain'd:

Thy practise'd poignard need not start at blood.

Strike then, for due revenge of slighted love;

And, punishing the guilty—once be just.

D. Car. I find then, Madam, you wou'd brave my

weakness!

Proud of offending one who must forgive.

But you invoke my vengeance, and it comes.

Your fate is ready—for, your minion dies.

Who waits?—a guard there.

Enter Soldiers.

Al. Cruel christian insult!

Alv. My son! what mean you? What rash trans-
port this?

Think whom you sentence.—Is his person hateful,
Yet reverence his virtue and his name.

He, who is helpless, in his hater's hands,

Claims safety from his weakness.—Why, why,
Carlos,

Must I, a second time, remind your mercy?

I gave you life—but Zamor gave it me.

Be warn'd—not forfeit honour to revenge.

Enter Don Alonzo, with Spanish Soldiers.

Alon. Pardon an entrance, Sir, thus unprepar'd.
The woods, that border on the neighb'ring plain,
Pour out a sudden swarm of Indian foes.
Arm'd they advance, as if to scale our walls:
And Zamor's name, resounded, rings to heaven.
Gleamings, from golden bucklers, meet the sun;
And in firm line, and close compacted march,
The stretch'd battalions move, in martial justness.
They hold such discipline, such order'd motion,
As ne'er was known before to savage foes.
As if from us they catch'd the lights of war,
And turn'd the burning lessons on their teachers.

D. Car. Away then! let us think 'em worth our meeting.

—Heroes of Spain! ye fav'rite sons of war!
All corners of the world are yours to shine in.
Help me to teach these slaves to know their masters.
Bring him along by force.

Za. Tyrants, they dare not.

Or are they gods, who cannot be repell'd?
And proof against the wounds, they seek to give?

D. Car. Surround him.

Al. Spare him, save him!

Alv. Son; be cool;

And still remember what your father owes him.

D. Car. Sir, I remember, 'tis a soldier's duty
To bear down opposition: so you taught me.

[*Alonzo, and Spanish Soldiers, surround and seize Zamor.*]

Your pardon, Sir—I go, where honour calls me.

[*Exit, with Zamor, and all the Spanish Soldiers.*]

Al. Low, at your feet, I fall; your virtue's claim.

[*To Alvarez.*]

'Tis the first homage fortune yet has taught me.
Grant me the wish'd release of death's kind hand,
From miseries I cannot live to see.

But, dying, let me leave this witness with you,
That, true to my first vows, I change not lightly.

Two different claimers cannot both possess
One faithful heart, that can but once be given.
Zamor is mine; and I am only Zamor's.
Zamor is virtuous, as a fancied angel.

'Twas Zamor gave his life, to good Alvarez!

Alv. I feel the pity of a father for thee.

I mourn afflicted Zamor: I will guard him:

I will protect you both, unhappy lovers!

Yet, ah! be mindful of the marriage tie,
That, but this morning, bound thy days to Carlos.

Thou art no longer thine, my mournful daughter.
Carlos has been too cruel; but repents it:

And this once-cruel Carlos is thy husband.

He is my son too; and he loves us both.

Pity soon softens hearts, where love has enter'd.

Al. Ah, why did Heav'n not make you Zamor's father!

Greatness with sweetness join'd, like fire with light,
Each aiding other, mingle warm with bright.
What the kind wants, th' associate strong supplies,
And from the gentle, peace and calmness rise.



ACT IV.

Don Alvarez and Don Carlos.

Shouts, Trumpets, a long and lofty Flourish.

Alv. **D**ESERVE, my son, this triumph of your arms:

Your numbers, and your courage, have prevail'd;

And of this last best effort of the foe,

Half are no more; and half are yours, in chains.

Disgrace not due success, by undue cruelties:

But call in mercy, to support your fame.

I will go visit the afflicted captives,

And pour compassion on their aching wounds.

Meanwhile, remember, you are man and christian.

Bravely, at once, resolve to pardon Zamor.

—Fain wou'd I soften this indocile fierceness;

And teach your courage how to conquer hearts.

D. Car. Your words pierce mine—freely devote

But leave at liberty my just revenge. [my life,

Pardon him—Why! the savage brute is lov'd!

Alv. Th' unhappily below'd most merit pity.

D. Car. Pity!—Cou'd I be sure of such reward,

I wou'd die pleas'd—and the shou'd pity me.

Alv. How much to be lamented is a heart,

At once by rage of headlong will oppress'd,

And by strong jealousies and doubtings torn!

D. Car. When jealousy becomes a crime—

Guard, Heaven,

That husband's honour, whom his wife not loves!

Your pity takes in all the world—but me.

Alv. Mix not the bitterness of distant fear

With your arriv'd misfortunes.—Since Alzira

Has virtue, it will prove a wiser care

To soften her, for change, by patient tenderness,

Than, by reproach, confirm a wilting hate.

Her heart is, like her country, rudely sweet—

Repelling force, but gentle to be kind.

Softness will soonest bend the stubborn will.

D. Car. Softness!—by all the wrongs of wo-
man's hate,

Too much of softness but invites disdain.

Flatter'd too long, beauty at length grows wanton,

And, insolently scornful, slight's its praiser.

Oh, rather, Sir, be jealous for my glory;

And urge my doubting anger to resolve.

Too low already, condescension bow'd,

Nor blush'd, to match the conqueror with the slave!

But, when this slave, unconscious what she owes,

Proudly repays humility with scorn,

And braves, and hates the unassuming love,

Such love is weakness—and submission, there,

Gives sanction to contempt, and rivets pain.

Alv. Thus, youth is ever apt to judge in haste,

And lose the medium in the wild extreme.

Do not repent, but regulate, your passion:

Though love is reason, it's excess is rage.

Give me, at least, your promise, to reflect,

In cool, impartial, solitude: and still,

No last decision, till we meet again.

D. Car. It is my father asks—and, had I will,

Nature denies me power, to answer, No!

I will, in wisdom's right, suspend my anger.

—Yet—Spare my loaded heart—nor add more
weight;

Lest my strength fail beneath th' unequal pressure.

Alv. Grant yourself time, and all you want comes
with it. [Exit.

D. Car. [*Alone.*] And—must I coldly then, to
pensive piety,

Give up the livelier joys of wish'd revenge!

Must I repel the guardian cares of jealousy,

And slacken every rein to rival love!

Must I reduce my hopes beneath a savage?

And poorly envy such a wretch as Zamor!

A coarse luxuriance of spontaneous virtue!

A shoot of rambling, fierce, offensive freedom;

Nature's wild growth—strong, but unprun'd, in
daring.

A rough, raw woodman, of this rugged clime;

Illiterate in the arts of polish'd life;

And who, in Europe, where the fair can judge,

Wou'd hardly, in our courts, be call'd a man!

—She comes!—Alzira comes!—unwilt'd—yet charming.

Enter Alzira.

Al. You turn, and shun me!—So, I have been told,

Spaniards, by custom, meet submissive wives.—
But, hear me, Sir—hear, even a suppliant wife;
Hear this unguilty object of your anger,
One, who can rev'rence, though she cannot love you:
One, who is wrong'd herself, not injures you:
One, who indeed is weak—and wants your pity.
I cannot wear disguise: be it th' effect
Of greatness, or of weakness, in my mind,
My tongue cou'd ne'er be mov'd, but my heart:
And that—was vow'd another's.—If he dies,
The honest plainness of my soul destroys him.—
You look surpris'd—I will, still more, surprise you.
I come, to try you deeply—for I mean
To move the husband, in the lover's favour!

—I had half flatter'd my unpractis'd hope,
That you, who govern others, shou'd yourself
Be temp'rate in the use of your own passions.
Nay, I persuaded my unchristian ignorance,
That an ambitious warrior's inselt pride
Shou'd plead in pardon of that pride in others.
—This I am sure of—that, forgiving mercy
Wou'd stamp more influence on our Indian hearts,
Than all our gold on those of men like you.
Who knows, did such a change endear your breast,
How far the pleasing force might soften mine?
Your right secures you my respect and faith—
Strive for my love—strive for whatever else
May charm—if aught there is can charm like love,
—Forgive me: I shall be betray'd by fear,
To promise, till I over-charge my power.—
Yet—try what changes gratitude can make.
A Spanish wife, perhaps, wou'd promise more:
Profuse in charms, and prodigal of tears,
Wou'd promise all things—and forget 'em all.
But I have weaker charms, and simpler arts.
Guileless of soul, and less a nature form'd me,
I err, in honest innocence of aim,
And, seeking to compose, inflame you more.
All I can add, is this—Unlovely force
Shall never bow me to reward constraint.
But—to what lengths I may be led, by benefits,
'Tis in your power to try, not mine to tell.

D. Car. 'Tis well.—Since justice has such pow'r
to guide you,

That you may follow duty, know it first.
Count modesty among your country's virtues;
And copy, not condemn, the wives of Spain.
'Tis your first lesson, Madam, to forget.
—Become more delicate, if not more kind,
And never let me hear the name I hate.—
You shou'd learn, next, to blush away your haste,
And wait in silence, till my will resolves
What punishment, or pity, suits his crimes.—
Know, last, that (thus provok'd) a husband's cle-
Out-stretches nature, if it pardons you. [sneering]
Learn thence, as grateful! that I want not pity.
And be the last to dare believe me cruel.

[*Exit Don Carlos.*]

Emi. Madam, be comforted—I mark'd him well;
I see, he loves; and love will make him softer.

Al. Love has no pow'r to act, when curb'd by jealousy.

Zamor must die—for I have ask'd his life.
Why did not I foresee the likely danger?
But has thy care been happier?—Canst thou save him?

Far, far, divided from me, may he live!
Hast thou made trial of his keeper's faith?

Emi. Gold, that with Spaniards, can outweigh their God,

Has bought his hand—and, so his faith's your own.

Al. Then Heav'n be bless'd, this metal, form'd for crimes,

Sometimes atones the wrongs 'tis dug to cause!
But, we lose time—Why dost thou seem to pause?

Emi. I cannot think they purpose Zamor's death.
Alvarez has not lost his pow'r so far,
Nor can the council—

Al. They are Spaniards all.

Mark the proud, partial guilt of these vain men:
Ours, but a country held to yield them slaves:
Who reign our kings, by right of different clime.
Zamor, meanwhile, by birth, true sovereign here,
Weights but a rebel in their righteous scale.

Oh, civiliz'd assent of social murder!
But why, Emira, should this soldier stay?

Emi. We may expect him instantly. The night,
Metinks, grown darker, veils your bold design,
Wearied by slaughter, and unwilt'd from blood,
The world's proud spoilers all lie hush'd in sleep.

Al. Away, and find this Spaniard. Guilt's bought
Opening the prison, innocence goes free. [hand]

Emi. See! by Cephania led, he comes with Zamor.
Be cautious, Madam, at so dark an hour,
Lest, meet, suspected honour should be lost;
And modesty, mistaken, suffer shame.

Al. What does thy ill-taught fear mistake for
shame?

Virtue, at midnight, walks as safe within,
As in the conscious glare of flaming day.

She who in forms finds virtue, has no virtue.

All the shame lies in hiding honest love.

Honour, the alien phantom, here unknown,
Lends but a length'ning shade to setting virtue.

Honour's not love of innocence, but praise;

The tear of censure, not the scorn of sin.

But I was taught, in a sincerer clime,

That virtue, tho' it shines not, still is virtue;

And inbred honour grows not, but at home.

This, my heart knows; and, knowing, bids me
dare,

Should Heav'n forsake the just, be bold and save
him.

Enter Zamor, with Cephania, and a Spanish Soldier.

Ah, fly! thy hopes are lost; thy torturer's ready.

Escape this moment, or thou stay'st to die.

Haste—lose no time—be gone: this guardian
Spaniard

Will teach thee to deceive the murderer's hope.

Reply not; judge thy fate from my despair;

Save, by thy flight, the man I love from death;

The man whom I have sworn to obey, from blood;

And a lost world, that knows thy worth, from tears.

Thy country calls thee; night conceals thy steps.

Pity thy fate, and leave me to my own.

Za. Thou robber's property! Thou christian's
wife!

Thou, who dar'st love me, yet dar'st bid me live!

If I must live, come thou, to make life tempting.

But 'twas a cruel wish—How could I shield thee,

Stript of my power and friends, and nothing left me,

But wrongs and misery?—I have no dower

To tempt reluctant love. All thou canst share

With me, will be—my desert—and my heart.

When I had more, I laid it at thy feet.

Al. Ah, what are crowns that must no more be
thine?

I lov'd not power, but thee: thyself once lost,

What has an empty world to tempt my stay?

Far in the depth of thy sad deserts, trac'd,

My heart will seek thee. Fancy, there, misleads

My weary, wand'ring steps; there horror finds,
And preys upon my solitude; there leaves me,
To languish life out in unheard complaints;
To waste and wither in the tearless winds;
And die with shame at breach of plighted faith,
For being only thine—and yet another's.
Go, carry with thee both my peace and life,
And leave—ah, would thou could'st!—thy sor-
rows here.

I have my lover and my fame to guard,
And I will save them both—Be gone—for ever.

Za. I hate this fame, false avarice of fancy;
The sickly shade of an unsolid greatness;
The lying lure of pride, that Europe cheats by:
Perish the groundless seemings of their virtue!
But shall forc'd oaths at hated christians' altars,
Shall gods, who rob the gods of our forefathers,
Shall these obtrude a lord, and blast a lover?

Al. Since it was sworn, or to your gods or theirs,
What help is left me?

Za. None.—Adieu—for ever.

Al. Stay—What a farewell this!—Return,
I charge thee.

Za. Carlos, perhaps, will hear thee.

Al. Ah, pity, rather

Than thus upbraid my wretchedness!

Za. Think, then,

On our past vows.

Al. I think of nothing now,

But of thy danger.

Za. Oh, thou hast undone

The tenderest, fondest lover!

Al. Still I love;

Crime as it is, I love thee. Leave me, Zamor,
Leave me alone to die—Ha! cruel! tell me,
What horrible despair, revolving wildly, [tal?
Bursts from thy eyes, with purpose more than mor-
Za. It shall be so. [Going.

Al. What would'st thou? Whither go'st thou? [Holding him.

Za. To make a proper use of unhop'd freedom.

Al. By Heav'n, if 'tis to death, I'll follow thee.

Za. Horrors, unmix'd with love, demand me
now.

Leave me—Time flies—Night blackens—Duty
calls.

Soldier, attend my steps.

[Exit hastily.

Al. Alas, Emira!

I faint—I die—In what ungovern'd start
Of some rash thought he left me?—Haste, Emira,
Watch this fear'd meaning; trace his fatal footsteps;
And, if thou seest him safe, return, and bless me.

[Exit Emira.

A black, presaging sorrow swells my heart!

What could a day like this produce, but woe?

Oh, thou dark, awful, vast, mysterious Power,

Whom christians worship, yet not comprehend!

If, ignorant of thy new laws, I stray,

Shed from thy distant heav'n, where'er it shines,

One ray of guardian light, to clear my way:

And teach me, first to find, then act, thy will.

But, if my only crime is love of Zamor,

If that offends thy sight, and claims thy anger,

Pour thy due vengeance on my hopeless head;

For I am then a wretch, too lost for mercy.

Yet, be the wanderer's guide, amidst his deserts!

Greatly dispense thy good with equal hand;

For, partial to the partial, give Spain all.

Thou canst not be confin'd to care of parts;

Seedless of one world, and the other's father;

Conquish'd and victors are alike to thee;

And all our vain distinctions mix before thee.

Oh, what foreboding shrip!—Again! and louder!

Oh, Heav'n! amidst the wildness of that sound,
I heard the name of Zamor!—Zamor's lost—
Hark!—a third time!—and now the mingled cries
Come quick'ning on my ear!

Enter Emira, frighted.

—Emira, save me!

What has he done?—In pity of my fears,
Speak, and bestow some comfort.

Emi. Comfort is lost;

And all the rage of death has sure possess'd him.

First, he chang'd habits with the trembling soldier;

Then snatch'd his weapon from him.—The
robbed wretch

Flew, frighted, toward the gate—while furious
Zamor,

Wild, as the fighting rage of wintry winds,

Rush'd to the public hall, where sits the council.

Following, I saw him pass the sleeping guards;

But lost him when he enter'd. In a moment,

I heard the sound of voices cry, He's dead.

Then, clam'rous calls from ev'ry way at once,

To arms, to arms!—Ah, Madam, stay not here!

Fly to the inmost rooms, and shun the danger.

Al. No, dear Emira; rather let us try,

Whether our weakness may not find some means,

Late and unlikely as it is, to save him.

I, too, dare die.

Emi. They come—Protect us, Heaven!

Enter Don Alonzo.

Alon. Madam, you stir no farther—I have orders
To seize your person. 'Tis a charge unwill'd.

Al. Whence dost thou come? What fury sent thee
What is become of Zamor? [hither?

Alon. At a time

So full of danger, my respect gives way

To duty—You must please to follow me.

Al. Oh, fortune, fortune!—This is too severe!

Zamor is dead, and I am only captive!

Why dost thou weep? What have a Spaniard's tears

To do with woes, which none but Spaniards cause?

Come; if to death thou lead'st me, 'twill be kind.

There only, weakness wrong'd, can refuge find.

[Exit.

A C T V.

Alzira, guarded.

Al. **A**M I to die? Answer, ye dumb destroyers!
Ye wretches, who provoke, yet mock at
Heaven;

And when you mean to murder, say you judge!

Why does your brutal silence leave my soul

Fluct'ring, 'twixt hope and fear, in torturing doubt?

Why am I not inform'd of Zamor's fate?

They will not speak—No matter—She who hopes

To hear no good, why should she hear at all?

The conduct of these watchful mutes is strange.

They seize me, guard me, and confine me here;

Yet answer nothing, but with looks of hate.

Chancing, but now, to sigh my Zamor's name,

E'en these low monsters, struck with Spanish envy,

Started, turn'd pale, and trembled at the sound.

Enter Ezmont.

Alas!—my father, too!

Ez. To what dark depth

Of sad despair, hast thou reduc'd us all?

See now, the fruits of thy unlift'ning love!

Even in the instant, while, with growing hope,

We pleaded earnest for the life of Zamor;

While we yet hung on the half-granted prayer;

An evil-spirited soldier drew our notice tow'rd him,

'Twas Zamor—dreadful, in a borrow'd dress!
At once he hurl'd his furious eyes amongst us,
And his more furious person. Scarce I saw,
So rapid was his motion, that his hand
Held a drawn sword. To enter, reach our seats,
And, lion-like, spring to the breast of Carlos;
Th' assault, the wound, the death, was all one moment.

Out gush'd your husband's blood, to stain your father,
As if 'twould lend me blushes for a daughter.
Zamor, meanwhile, the dreadful action done,
Soft'ning to sudden calmness, at the feet
Of sad Alvarez fell, and to his hand
Reign'd the sword, which his son's blood made
The father started into back'ning terror! [horrid.
The murderer dash'd his bosom to the ground;
I but reveng'd (he cry'd) my wrongs and shame;
I but my duty knew—know you your own.
Nature your motive, and oppression mine.
He said no more; but, prostrate, hop'd his doom.
Th' afflicted father sunk upon my bosom;
The silent night grew frightful with our cries.
From ev'ry side at once in broke the swarms;
A flow of fruitless help surrounded Carlos,
To stop th' out-welling blood, and hold back life.
But what most shakes me, tho' 'tis told thee last,
Is, that they think thee guilty of his death;
And, insolently loud, demand thy own.

Al. Ah!—can you—

Ex. No. Impossible. I cannot.

I know thy heart too well to wrong thee so.
I know thee too, too capable of weakness;
But not of purpos'd blood. I saw this danger;
But thy own eyes, even on the brink of fate,
Were blinded by thy love, and thou art fall'n.
Thy husband murder'd by thy lover's hand;
The council that accuses, will condemn thee,
And ignominious death becomes thy doom.
I came to warn thee, and prepare thy spirit.
Now, hast'ning back, try every hope for pardon;
Or, failing to redeem thee, share thy death.

Al. My pardon!—Pardon at these wretches hands!
The prince my father stoop his prayers to them!
Death, if it hides me from that thought, is rapture.
Ah, Sir, live on! hope still some happier day,
To pay back all these pangs, and bless Peru;
Wait that due day, and love the lost Alzira.
'Tis all the prayer she makes, and all the wishes.
I pity dying Carlos; for I find
His fate too cruel; and I mourn it deeper,
Thro' fear he has deserv'd it. As for Zamor,
Whose rashness has reveng'd a country's wrongs,
Urg'd by too keen remembrance of his own,
I neither censure nor excuse his deed.
I would have staid him, but he rush'd to die;
And 'tis not in my choice to live without him.

Ex. Shed thy wish'd mercy here, all-powerful Heaven!

[Exit.]

Al. My weeping father call'd on Heav'n to save
I will not talk the grace of Heav'n so far. [mc.
Let me no longer be, and I'm not wretched.
The Almighty christian Power, that knows me in-
Exacts (they say) long life, in fix'd distress; [nocent,
And suffers not the brave to shorten woe.
If so, the gods, once mine, were less severe.
Why should the wretch, who hopes not, struggle on,
Thro' viewless lengths of circling miseries,
And dread the hand of death, that points to refuge?
Sure christians, in this tale, belye their God.
His conqu'ring favourites, whom he arms with
thunder,
Can they have right, from him, to waste the world,
To drive whole millions into death's cold arms?

And shall not I, for safety, claim that power
Which he permits to them for martial rage?

Ah, Zamor comes! They lead him out to die.

Enter Zamor in Chains, guarded by Spaniards.

Za. Kind in their purpos'd insult, they have brought me

Where my expiring soul shall mix with thine.

Yes, my Alzira, we are doom'd together.

Their black tribunal has condemn'd us both.

But Carlos is not dead—that wounds me deepest.

Carlos survives, to boast short triumph o'er us;

And dies so slowly, that our fate comes first.

Yet, he must die; my hand not err'd so far,

But he must die; and when he does, my soul

Shall snatch th' expected moment, hovering, watchful,

And hunt him, in revenge, from star to star.

Pious Alvarez, mournful comes behind,

Charg'd with our bloody sentence, sign'd in council,

That murder may be sanctified by form.

My only grief is, that thou diest for me.

Al. That, that should leave thy grief without a cause.

Since I am thus belov'd, to die with Zamor,

Is happiness unhop'd. Bless, bless my fate,

For this sole blow, that could have broke my chain.

Think that this period of suppos'd distress,

This moment, that unites us, tho' in death,

Is the first time my love was free from woe.

The smiling fate restores me to myself;

And I can give a heart, now all my own.

If there's a cause for tears, Alvarez claims 'em.

I, while he speaks our doom, shall feel but his.

Za. See, where the mourner comes, and weeps his errand!

Enter Alvarez.

Alv. Which of us three does fortune most distress?
What an assemblage ours, of mingled woes! [tress?

Za. Since Heaven will have it so, that, from thy tongue,

I should receive death's summons, let it come:

'Twill have one power to please—for I shall hear thee,

Do not then pity, but condemn me boldly;

And, if thy heart, tho' Spanish, bends beneath it,

Think thou but doom'dst an unsubmitting savage,

Who kill'd thy son, because unlike his father.

But what has poor Alzira done against thee?

Why must she die in whom a people lives;

In whom alone glows that collected soul;

That, in past ages, brighten'd all Peru?

Is innocence a crime where Spaniards judge?

Known, and assum'd by us, for all thy virtues,

The jealous envy of thy land reclaims thee,

And crops thy Indian growth, to creep like Spain.

Al. Wond'rous old virtue! obstinately kind!

Thou, singly just, amidst a race of thieves!

'Twere to be base as they are, could I stoop

To deprecate a vengeance duly thine.

For thy son's blood be mine the willing sacrifice.

All I require is but escape from slander;

From poor suspicion of a guilt I scorn.

Carlos, tho' hated, was a hated husband;

Whence, even my hatred ow'd his life defence.

He was Alvarez' son too; and, as such,

Call'd for that reverence which himself deserv'd not.

As for thy nation, let them praise or blame me;

Thy witness only can be worth my claim.

As for my death, 'tis joy to die with Zamor:

And all the pain I suffer—is for thee.

Alv. Words will have way; or grief, suppress'd in vain,

Would burst it's passage with th' out-rushing soul,
Whose sorrows ever match'd this mingled scene

Of tenderness with horror? My son's murderer
Is Zamor: he who guarded me from murder,
Is also Zamor. Hold that image fast,
Afflicted nature. Life, unwish'd by me
Is due to Zamor. Young, below'd, untry'd
In hope's false failings, life might make him happy.
My taste of time is gone; and life, to me,
Is but an evening's walk in rain and darkness.
Father I am (at least I was a father;)
But every father first was form'd a man:
And, spite of nature's call, that cries for vengeance,
The voice of gratitude must still be heard.
Oh, thou, so late my daughter! thou, whom yet,
Spite of these tears, I call by that lov'd name!
Mistake not my pursuit. I cannot taste
Those horrible reliefs that rise from blood.
It shocks me thro' a soul that feels for thee.
Hard stroke or justice! thus to lose at once,
My daughter, my deliverer, and my son.
The council, with misguided view to sooth me,
Ill chose my tongue to tell their dreadful will.
True, I receiv'd the charge; for I had weigh'd it.
'Twere not impossible, perhaps, to save you:
Zamor might make it easy.

Za. Can I do it?

Can Zamor save Alzira? Quickly tell me
How, by what length of torments, and 'tis done?

Alv. Cast off thy idol gods, and be a christian:
That single change reverses all our fates.

Kind to the courted souls of Pagan converts,
We have a law remits their body's doom.
This latent law, by Heaven's peculiar mercy,
Points out a road, and gives a right to pardon.
Religion can disarm a christian's anger.

Thy blood becomes a brother's, so converted,
And with a living son repays a dead.
Prevented vengeance, seiz'd in her descent,
Sore rests suspended, and forgets to fall.
From thy new faith, Alzira draws new life;
And both are happy here, and sav'd hereafter.
Why art thou silent? Is the task so hard,
To add eternal life, to life below?

Speak—from thy choice, determine my relief,
Pain wou'd I owe thee yet a second being.

Yes—to restore the life thou robb'd me of,
A childless father wishes thee to live.
Alzira is a christian; be thou so.

'Tis all the recompence my wrongs will urge.

Za. [To Alzira.] Shall we, thou fairest, no-
blest boast of beauty!

Shall we so far indulge our fear to die?
Shall the soul's baseness bid the body live?

Shall Zamor's gods bow to the gods of Carlos?

Why wou'd Alvarez bend me down to shame?

Why wou'd he thus become the spirit's tyrant?

Into how strange a snare am I impell'd!

Either Alzira dies, or lives to scorn me!

Tell me—When fortune gave thee to my power,

Had I, at such a purchase, held thy life,

Tell me, with honest truth—wou'd thou have
bought it?

Alv. I shou'd have pray'd the Power, I now im-
plore,

To widen, for his truth, a heart like thine:

Dark as it is, yet worthy to be christian.

Za. [To Alzira.] Death has no pain, but what
I feel for thee.

Life has no power to charm, but what thou giv'st it.

Thou, then, art my soul, vouchsafe to guide it.

But, think!—remember, ere thou bid'st me chuse!

'Tis on a matter of more weight than life;

'Tis on a subject that concerns my gods:

And all those gods in one—my dear Alzira!

I trust it to thy honour—Speak—and fix me.

If thou conceiv'st it shame, thou wilt disdain it.

Al. Then, hear me, Zamor.—My unhappy
father

Dispos'd my willing heart, 'twixt Heaven and thee:

The god, he chose, was mine—thou may'st, per-

Accuse it, as the weakness of my youth: [haps,

But, 'twas not so. My soul, enlarg'd, and clear,

Took in the solemn light of christian truth:

I saw—at least, I thought I saw, conviction.

And, when my lips abjur'd my country's gods,

My secret heart confirm'd the change within.

But had I wanted that directive zeal,

Had I renounc'd my gods, yet still believ'd 'em;

That—had not been an error, but a crime:

That had been mocking Heaven's whole host, at
once;

The powers I quitted, and the power I chose.

A change like that, had err'd, beyond the tongue:

And taught the silent, servile soul, to lye.

I cou'd have wish'd, that Heaven had lent thee light,

But since it did not—let thy virtue guide thee.

Za. I knew thy gen'rous choice, before I heard it.

Who, that can die with thee, wou'd shun such death,

And live to his own infamy?—Not Zamor.

Alv. Inhuman slights of yourselves and me!

Whom honour renders blind, and virtue cruel!

[A dead march,

Hark!—the time presses.—These are sounds of
sorrow.

Enter Don Alonzo, followed by a mixed Crowd of
Spaniards and Americans, mournful.

Alon. We bring, obedient to his last command,

Our dying captain, your unhappy son,

Who lives no longer, than to reach your bosom.

A furious crowd of his lamenting friends

Press, to attend him, and revenge his blood.

Enter Don Carlos, brought in by Spanish Soldiers,

surrounded by a Number of Followers, some of
whom advance to seize Alzira.

Za. [Interposing.] Wretches! keep distance.—
Let Alzira live;

Mine was the single guilt—be mine the vengeance.

Al. Be fasted, ye officious hounds of blood:

Guiltless or guilty, 'tis my choice to die.

Alv. My son! my dying son!—This silent
paleness,

This look, speaks for thee, and forbids all hope.

Za. [To Don Car.] Even to the last then, thou
maintain'st thy hate?

Come—see me suffer; mark my eye; and scorn me,
If my expiring soul confesses fear.

Look—and be taught, at least, to die—by Zamor.

D. Car. [To Zamor.] I have no time to copy
out thy virtues:

But, there are some of mine, I come to teach thee,
I shou'd, in life, have given thy pride example:

Take it, too late, in death; and mark it well.

—Sir, my departing spirit staid it's journey,

[To Alvarez,

First, till my eyes might leave their beams in yours;

And their dim lights expire, amidst your blessing.

Next, what you taught me, 'tis my task to show,

And die the son of your paternal virtue.

—Eager in life's warm rage, I never stopp'd

To look behind me, and review my way.

But, at the goal, before I judg'd it near,

I start—and recollect forgotten slidings.

On the grave's serious verge, I turn—and see

Humanity oppress'd, to cherish pride;

Heaven has reveng'd the earth—and Heav'n is
just!

Cou'd my own blood but expiate what I shed,

All my rash sword has drawn from suff'ring innocence,

I shou'd lie down in dust—and rest in peace.

Cheated by prosp'rous fortune, death deals plainly;

But—I have learnt to live, when life forsakes me.

Safe and forgiven, be the hand I fall by.

Power is yet mine; and it absolves my murder.

Live, my proud enemy; and live in freedom.

Live—and observe, tho' christians oft act ill,

They must forgive ill actions in another.

—Esmont, my friend! and you, ye friendless Indians!

Subjects, not slaves! be rul'd henceforth by law:

Be grateful to my pity, though 'twas late;

And teach your country's kings to fear no longer.

—Rival, learn hence the difference 'twixt our gods:

Thine have inspir'd thee to pursue revenge;

But mine, when that revenge had reach'd my life,

Command me to esteem, and give thee pardon.

Alv. Virtues like these, my son, secure thy peace:

But double the distress of us who lose thee.

Al. Of all the painful wonders thou hast caus'd me,
This change, this language, will afflict me most!

Za. Die soon, or live for ever.—If thou thus

Go'st on, to charm my anger into envy,

I shall repent, I was not born a christian,

And hate the justice that compell'd my blow!

D. Car. I will go farther yet---I will not leave thee,

Till I have soften'd envy into friendship.

Mournful Alzira has been too unhappy:

Lov'd to distress, and married to misfortune!

I wou'd do something to atone her wrongs;

And with a softer sense, imprint her pity.

Take her—and owe her to the hand she hates.

Live—and remember me without a curse.

Resume lost empire o'er your conquer'd states:

Be friends to Spain—nor enemies to me.

—Vouchsafe my claim, Sir, to this son, this daughter: *[To Alvarez.]*

And be both father and protector too: May Heaven and you be kind! and they be christians!

Za. I stand immoveable—confus'd—astonish'd!

If these are christian virtues, I am christian.

The faith that can inspire this gen'rous change,

Must be divine—and glows with all its God!

—Friendship, and constancy, and right, and pity,

All these were lessons I had learnt before.

But this unnatural grandeur of the soul

Is more than mortal; and out reaches virtue.

It draws—it charms—it binds me to be christian.

It bids me blush at my remember'd rashness:

Curse my revenge—and pay thee all my love.

[Throws himself at his feet.]

Al. A widow'd wife, blushing to be thus late,

In her acknowledgment of tender pity;

Low, at your injur'd feet, with prostrate heart,

[Kneels with Zamor.]

Weeps your untimely death; and thanks your goodness.

—Torn by contending passions, I want power

To speak a thousand truths, I see you merit:

But honour and confess your greatness wrong'd.

D. Car. Weep not, Alzira—I forgive again.

—For the last time, my father, lend your bosom:

Live to be bless'd!—and make Alzira so!

Remember, Zamor—that a christian—Oh!

[Dies.]

Alv. I see the hand of Heaven in our misfortune. *[To Esmont.]*

But justice strikes; and suff'ers must submit.

Woes are good counsellors; and kindly show,

What prosp'rous error never lets us know.

